

NOTE ON A FLY WHICH PREYS ON HUMAN BEINGS.

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THE example exhibited was bred from larvae, nine in number, extracted from the arm of a child in Natal, and was sent to the Museum by Col. J. H. Bowker without any other information.

Some time back I received from a valued friend of mine, living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marquez, Delagoa Bay, a fly larva in spirit, with the intimation that he thought the insects were taking their revenge on him—he was at the time collecting for us. He wrote that for several days he had been suffering untold torture from what appeared to him to be a small boil on the calf of his leg.

In vain did he poultice it with hot emollients, the pain was greater after the application, and one day he cut open the tumour and while pressing it with his fingers to expel what he thought would prove to be putrid matter he ejected this large grub.

I have not been able to identify this particular fly, but it is not a bot fly (Æstrid) nor is the larva that of an Æstrid. It is perhaps allied to *Bengalia depressa* (Walk.)

Some of the *Muscidae* have been known to prey on human bodies. Such is the case in America, where *Lucilia macellaria*, i.e., *Lucilia hominivorax*, Coquerel, is found I believe from the River Plate to Kansas, U.S. This fly deposits its eggs in the nostrils of man, the larvae are soon hatched and force their way through the frontal sinuses, destroy the palate, gnaw through the gums, and the result is generally death. As many as three hundred larvae were met with in one case. Drs. Coquerill and F. H. Snow of Kansas have given the most harrowing technical details of the *modus operandi* of the screw-worms—as they are called in America.